

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleotide sequence encoding for a protein characterized in having a silencing activity and in comprising a RNA-dependent RNA polymerase domain [~~according to claim 4~~], wherein said nucleotide sequence is the sequence [~~of SEQ ID No. 2~~] from nt. 2447 to nt. 6652 of SEQ ID No. 1 or its complementary sequence.

7. (Currently Amended) [~~Expression~~] An expression vector comprising, under the control of a promoter that directs the expression in bacteria, the nucleotide sequence according to claim [~~1~~] 6.

8. (Currently Amended) [~~Expression~~] An expression vector comprising, under the control of a promoter that directs the expression in plant organs, the nucleotide sequence according to claim [~~1~~] 6 in a sense [~~or~~] and anti-sense orientation.

1 9. (Currently Amended) [~~Expression~~] An expression vector comprising, under the
2 control of a promoter that directs the expression in fungi, the nucleotide sequence according to
3 claim[1] 6 in a sense [~~or~~] and anti-sense orientation.

1 10. (Currently Amended) An Expression vector comprising, under the control of a
2 promoter that directs the expression in animals, the nucleotide sequence according to claim[1]
3 6 in a sense [~~or~~] and anti-sense orientation.

1 11. (Currently Amended) A Bacterial organism transformed the expression vector
2 active in bacteria according to claim 7.

1 12. (Cancelled)

1 13. (Cancelled)

1 14. (Currently Amended) A Fungus transformed by the expression vector active in
2 fungi according to claim 9.

1 15. (Cancelled).

1 16. (Cancelled)

1 17. (Cancelled)

1 18. (Cancelled)

1 19. (Cancelled)

1 20. (Cancelled)

1 21. (Cancelled)

1 22. (Cancelled)

1 23. (Cancelled)